

TOAD BOY

- IN -

"CHILI BOY"

Written by

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EXT. THE PROMENADE - MORNING

It's another sunny day in the boardwalk town of St. Rickets, a booming dockside community that looks like a 1930's carnival plopped onto the salty shore: all popcorn lights, wood paneling and handpainted billboards. It's a "Caliopie-punk" community, where the local transit is a rollercoaster.

Cheerfully strolling down the crowded promenade is TOAD BOY (10), a slimy, green and blissfully happy-go-lucky kid. He enthusiastically waves to the tourists as they walk by.

Alongside him is his rascally best friend SALLY MANDER (11), a town local known for talking tough (with a heavy Nor'easter accent) and looking out for herself. And maybe Toad Boy too.

TOAD BOY

What a gorgeous day in St. Rickets!
Not a problem in sight.

SALLY

You mean you're gonna give yourself
a day off from helping folks?

TOAD BOY

Sally, as long as everyone's happy,
I'm happy.

Toad Boy suddenly spots a WEeping LASS (6) and rushes over.

TOAD BOY (CONT'D)

Child, what troubles you?

WEeping LASS

Me Grand-ma-ma is stuck!

The Weeping Lass points to a feeble ELDERLY DOWAGER, stuck in the median of the boardwalk while bumper cars honk angrily.

IMPATIENT CLOWN DRIVER

This isn't funny! Some of us have
work!

Toad Boy grins at the Weeping Lass.

TOAD BOY

Worry not about these clowns: Toad
Boy is your boy!

T.B. whips out his LONG STICKY TONGUE and PULLS the Dowager across the street like an expertly played game of Frogger. When she arrives, she's covered in glistening slime.

DOWAGER

Thank you, Boy. (to Lass) But we
musn't dally, our search continues!

The Dowager slips on her own slime trail and WOOSHES O/S. The
Lass dutifully follows behind.

DOWAGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

<PLAYFUL YELL>

TOAD BOY

(winks and points) You're welcome.
(beat) It sure feels swell to help.

SALLY

Hey Toad Boy, lookit that!

Toad Boy's eyes land on a FLYER for a sickly looking Lost
Dog, "\$\$\$" "RESPONDS TO ZEPP".

SALLY (CONT'D)

No, not that!

Sally rotates TB, scraping the ground like heavy furniture.

SALLY (CONT'D)

That!

Pasted on a wall is a large and colorful OLD-TIMEY BILLBOARD
advertising ST. RICKETS ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF TOMORROW!

But what piques T.B.'s interest more than SMILING CARTOON
CHILI BEANS is the 1st Prize Award: BE MAYOR FOR A DAY.

T.B. imagines one of the chili beans wearing a MAYOR'S SASH,
which MORPHS into a sash-adorned Toad Boy. It's a revelation.

TOAD BOY

Be the mayor? Think of all the
people I could help.
Simultaneously!

TB counts on his fingers, thinking...

TOAD BOY (CONT'D)

Two... seven... forty-five...
Everyone in town! Come on, Sal,
let's get cooking!

Sally jumps on TB's back and they slide away on his tongue!

EXT. HOUSEBOAT - MORNING

Toad Boy's HOUSEBOAT is more house than boat, with a PICKET FENCE and FLOWERBEDS surrounding his floating starter-home.

INT. HOUSEBOAT KITCHEN - MORNING

The inside of Toad Boy's houseboat is FUNKY, COLORFUL and FUN, like a turn-of-the-century Pee-Wee's Playhouse. Parts look like they were salvaged from a CAROUSEL.

The KITCHEN is decently stocked with CANNED FOOD and SPICES. We see Toad Boy gathering them while leaning on a STOOL. Sally watches him from the KITCHEN TABLE, her feet kicked up.

As T.B. sets a HUGE CAN OF BEANS over a flame he reminisces:

TOAD BOY

Before I ran away from the circus,
this humble chili was my favorite
thing to eat. It's sure to win!

Drawn by the smell is Toad Boy's wall-eyed but surprisingly intelligent Dodo, CHARLOTTE. She carefully pops the can with her beak and pours some of the contents into a WOODEN BOWL.

TOAD BOY (CONT'D)

Thanks Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE

(BIRD CRY)

With a quick flourish of crumpled SALTINES Toad Boy presents his CHILI masterwork to Sally:

TOAD BOY

Made with love! Dig in!

Sally takes a bite and chews, but she looks unconvinced.

SALLY

It hits the spot, I guess... but
it's gotta have flash to win!
Where's the secret ingredients? The
pizzaz? The wowza?!

TOAD BOY

Well, I thought it was good.

SALLY

But it's a contest: you gotta make
something the judges think is good.

TOAD BOY

Gosh, then maybe I need a lesson in flavor if I'm gonna be mayor! I should poll the populi for help!

SALLY

That idea is infallible! I see literally no problems with this!

TOAD BOY

My constituents await! To the bus!

EXT. FOOD DISTRICT BUS STATION - DAY

A ROLLER COASTER pulls into the station and Toad Boy and Sally hop out into a wonderland of treats and sweets.

SALLY

That loop-de-loop on 7th always gets me. Well, here's Flavor Town!

TOAD BOY

And if there's anyone who knows flavor, it's my buddy Walt Jr.!

Toad Boy indicates the storefront of WALT'S MALTS, featuring a painted mascot of a BRIGHT-EYED BOY...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. WALT'S MALTS, - DAY

Now a PERPETUALLY EXHAUSTED TEEN, WALT JR. (13) is cleaning a broken milkshake machine.

WALT JR.

(sigh) From my Drama degree I stab at thee.

A jingle of bells indicates Toad Boy and Sally have arrived. T.B. is carrying a POT OF CHILI with two OVEN MITTS. Walt Jr. offers a tired smile and a tip of his cap.

TOAD BOY

Toad Boy, ahoy!

WALT JR.

Why if it isn't my slimiest customer! And his less slimy pal.

Walt stands with renewed energy and pushes an ICE-CREAM CONE close to Toad Boy's face like a microphone.

WALT JR. (CONT'D)
 Finally here to see my one-man
 show? "Love in the Time of Dairy?"

TOAD BOY
 Next time! Today I'm collecting
 flavors. What's your favorite?

WALT JR.
 Peppermint. It's like brushing your
 teeth with candy.

TOAD BOY
 Well then "mint me up" my good man!

Toad Boy smiles and Sally silently screams as the ICE CREAM
 plops into the chili pot.

EXT. WALT'S MALTS - CONTINUOUS

Now outside the shop, Sally looks shaken.

SALLY
 Okay, you got your special flavor!
 We're all happy! Let's go home.

TOAD BOY
 But we can't stop now: we need
 everyone's favorite flavors. I
 can't trust my gut on this one.

SALLY
 Then who do you trust?

TOAD BOY
 The Magnificent Amberson!

CUT TO:

INT. SISYPHUS THEATER - DAY

Even in an empty theater AMBERSON (14) looks spiffy in her
 flashy magician's outfit, more-so than HAZEL (9), her droll
 cousin/assistant in the bunny costume.

A WHOOSH of FLAME from Amberson's mouth ignites the stage.
 She immediately coughs up SMOKE and drops her TORCH. Hazel
 instinctively SOAKS her with a BUCKET OF WATER.

AMBERSON
 What was that for? The fire was
 moving away from my body.

HAZEL

I'm trying to bring your core temperature down. It's messing up the act.

AMBERSON

My core is perfect! It's the spotlights that make me sweat.

They hear Toad Boy CLAPPING from the front row. Sally's there too, WAVING the smoke away. In between them is the chili pot. They each have POPCORN and SODAS, chili pot included.

TOAD BOY

I thought it was great!

AMBERSON

Thanks Toad Boy. And it looks like you're cooking up something too?

HAZEL

Why does it smell like toothpaste?

Toad Boy shows off the chili to Amberson and Hazel. It's looking unappetizingly green from the mint.

TOAD BOY

It's my chili for tomorrow's contest. I need to add YOUR favorite flavors to it!

SALLY

(praying) Please don't be weird please don't be weird...

Amberson magically produces a GHOST PEPPER from thin air:

AMBERSON

Well that's easy, I love bhut jolokia. It's the basis of my fire breathing act!

Sally breaths a small sigh of relief.

HAZEL

And I love sliced pineapple.

SALLY

Nooooooooooooo!!!

Hazel and Amberson drop their ingredients into the pot. The colors churn and swirl, transforming into...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PROMENADE - DAY

T.B. parades down the promenade with Sally and his chili.

TOAD BOY
Flaaaavors! I'm looking for
favorite flaaaavors!

FARMER
Try corn!

A FARMER drops in an entire CORN COB. Sally CRINGES.

TOAD BOY
Thanks!

HIGH-SOCIETY LADY
Butternut SQUASH!

She forcefully CRUSHES a GOURD with her hands and adds it in.

TOAD BOY
Great idea!

MAN IN SUIT
The refreshing taste of
carbonization!

A BESUITED MAN pours out a clear SODA into the pot.

TOAD BOY
Ooh, tingly!

And Sally watches all this while biting down on her knuckle.

SALLY
H-hey Toad Boy, what if instead of
getting more ingredients you...
help find this dog instead!

Sally brandishes the Lost Dog flyer from earlier.

TOAD BOY
Absolutely, I will! *After* the con--

EXT. LIL' HERCULES GYM - CONTINUOUS

Sally and Toad Boy COLLIDE into HANDSOME JOHANSSON (15), a local bully and strongman. He's as dumb as he is muscular. He's downing DRY PROTEIN POWDER straight from the jar.

HANDSOME JOHANSSON
Hello, Sally my sweet.

SALLY
(icy) Hello Johansson.

HANDSOME JOHANSSON
That's *Handsome* Johansson! It's not
just a title; it's my legal name.
(sees T.B.) Ugh, Toad Boy.

TOAD BOY
Hi, Handsome Johansson!

HANDSOME JOHANSSON
That's *Handsome* Johansson. (beat)
Whaddya got there? Is it protein?

TOAD BOY
Technically, yes, it's for the
chili contest!

HANDSOME JOHANSSON
Hey Sally, if this loser loses the
contest you gotta go out with me.

SALLY
Not on your life, chowderbrain!

H.J. dumps a JAR of "NASTEE WHEY POWDER SHAKE" into the pot.

TOAD BOY
I bet if I had a sense of smell
this would smell delicious!

HANDSOME JOHANSSON
Whatever, freakboy. (To Sally) Hope
you have something nice to wear for
our first date!

H.J. blows kisses as he slides into the gym. Sally BATS THE
AIR to prevent any saliva from reaching her.

TOAD BOY
Sally, with this fancy chili
there's no way I can lose tomorrow.

Guilt bubbles in Sally... much like a pot of chili.

SALLY
How could you lose? After all, you
took my advice.

She stares deep into the nasty pot of chili and we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

It's the big day. STREAMERS and BALLOONS are strung while a BRASS BAND strikes up on an OUTDOOR STAGE. Very cheerful.

We scan past LOCAL CHEFS standing by their pots of chili. At the end of the line is Sally, Toad Boy and his SEALED POT.

MAYOR JERRY MANDER (40's), a slick huckster and Sally's absentee father takes the stage and GESTURES for silence.

MAYOR MANDER

Citizens of St. Rickets, thank you for gathering here today on this most auspicious day. The results of the swimsuit competition are in...

A group of men and women in LOBSTER COSTUMES cheer.

MAYOR MANDER (CONT'D)

But first, the chili must be judged. Strike up the band!

As the band plays once more, Mayor Mander produces a SILVER SPOON to light applause.

Toad Boy excitedly watches the mayor SAMPLE pots of chili. Sally, on the other hand, is grinding her teeth from anxiety.

MAYOR MANDER (CONT'D)

Mmm, decent/Good effort/etc.

SALLY

You know, these mooks don't even deserve your special chili. Let's get out of here before--

Just then, the Mayor arrives.

MAYOR MANDER

Sally. Still hanging with your amphiblian friend I see.

SALLY

Hello, Dad.

TOAD BOY

Hello current Mayor, I think you're going to be pleasantly surprised.

T.B. removes the POT LID. From the pot emits a PUNGENT SMELL.

The mayor dips his spoon in and it comes out a tad CORRODED. He cautiously places the chili in his MOUTH. Gulp. Swallow.

The mayor's eyes go big and watery!

MAYOR MANDER

In all my years of judging chili, I
have never come across **anything**
quite like this.

The Mayor puts a BLUE RIBBON on T.B. who's overwhelmed.

MAYOR MANDER (CONT'D)

The most AWFUL chili I've ever
tasted. Worst Prize.

Toad Boy is crestfallen. The ribbon reads: WORST PRIZE.

The crowd begins to LAUGH and JEER. It's like something out
of a nightmare. Handsome Johansson is GUFFAWING. Even the
smiling beans from the billboard are there and MOCKING him!

Then a voice booms out:

SALLY

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

Everything stops.

SALLY (CONT'D)

How. Dare. You. Look at this boy.
Lookathim!

Sally grabs the Mayors's head, then twists it towards T.B.

SALLY (CONT'D)

All he wanted to do was make humble
chili. But the reason it's so awful
isn't his fault: it's mine.

TOAD BOY

What are you flapping your gums
about, Sally?

SALLY

Adding ingredients wasn't gonna
give it pizzaz. It already had
it... 'cause it came from you.

Sally gets a little MISTY EYED and T.B. consoles her.

TOAD BOY

Aw, Sally. I forgive ya, you just
really wanted to see me win. That's
why you're my best mate!

They give each other a BIG HUG.

SALLY

I'm so, so sorry. If only there was a way for the town to eat your *real* chili.

Just then descending from out of the blinding sun... it's Charlotte! And she's holding the BIG CHILI CAN in her talons.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Whaaaaaaa?! It's Toad Boy's chili!

Charlotte begins to POUR chili out of the sky like manna from heaven above the crowd. It flows into the mouths of ONLOOKERS, BABIES, and the Mayor. And they really like it:

ONLOOKERS

That's some good chili/Delicious stuff/Very tasty/etc.

Sally tastes her finger.

SALLY

What is this, tumeric?

Toad Boy gently nudges Sally with his elbow.

TOAD BOY

Toldja I made it with love.

MAYOR MANDER

Toad Boy, I think we've been in error today.

He rips off the "Worst Prize" ribbon and slams it on H.J.

HANDSOME JOHANSSON

Aw...

SALLY

So who won the cookoff? It's Toad Boy, right? Isn't this how these things work?

MAYOR MANDER

I declare the winner to be...

A FLUFFY DOG runs in and starts licking chili off the ground. The Mayor points at it:

MAYOR MANDER (CONT'D)

This dog! This dog is the Mayor! Now let's go party at my mansion!!!

The crowd ERUPTS into CHEERS and parades out of the square.

Only the dog remains, still licking the ground. The Lass from earlier runs up and hugs the dog, whose tag reads, "ZEPPPO".

WEEPING LASS

Oh Zeppo! Grand-ma-ma and me were
looking everywhere for you. Thanks,
Toad Boy! You're a real hero.

Toad Boy tears up at the complement; he's done good today.

TOAD BOY

Another gorgeous day in St.
Rickets.

TOAD BOY (CONT'D)

And not a problem in sight.

SALLY

And not a problem in sight.

Laughing, our heroes point and snap their fingers at one another! Things are once again as they should be.

THE END